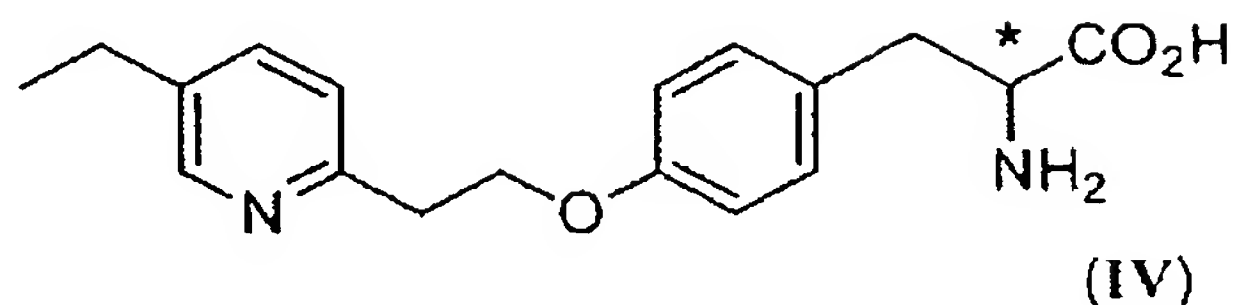


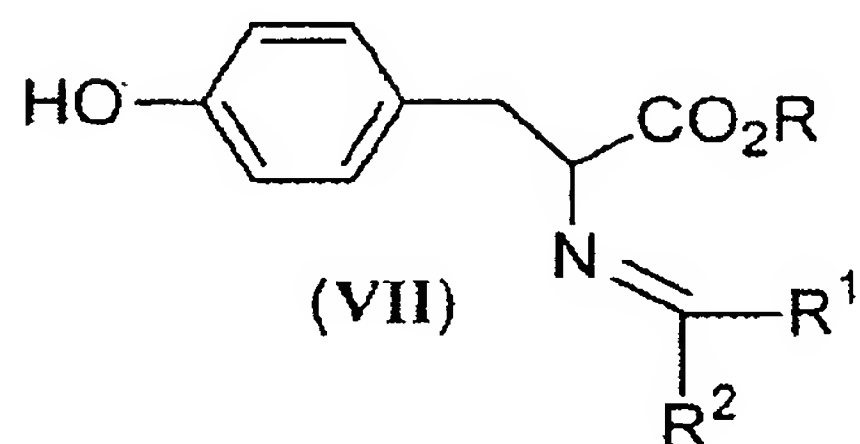
IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Original) The compound of formula (IV):

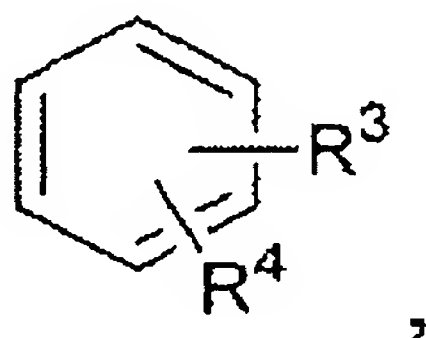


in the form of either one of its two pure enantiomers, of racemic mixtures, or of mixtures enriched in either of its two enantiomers, as well as its salts, solvates and hydrates.

2. (Original) A method of production of the compound of claim 1, characterized in that it comprises reaction of a compound of formula (VII)



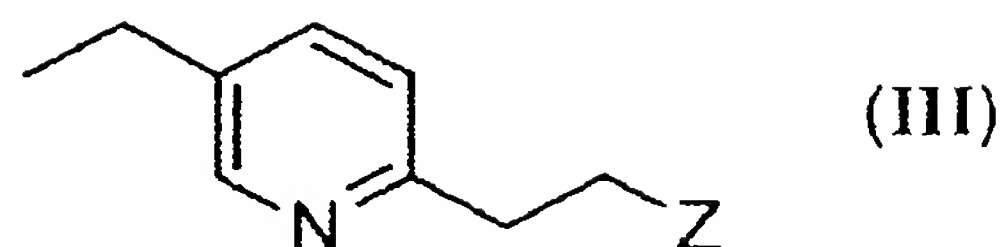
in which: R can be hydrogen or a C₁-C₄ alkyl group; R¹ and R² can be, without distinction, hydrogen or an aryl group of formula



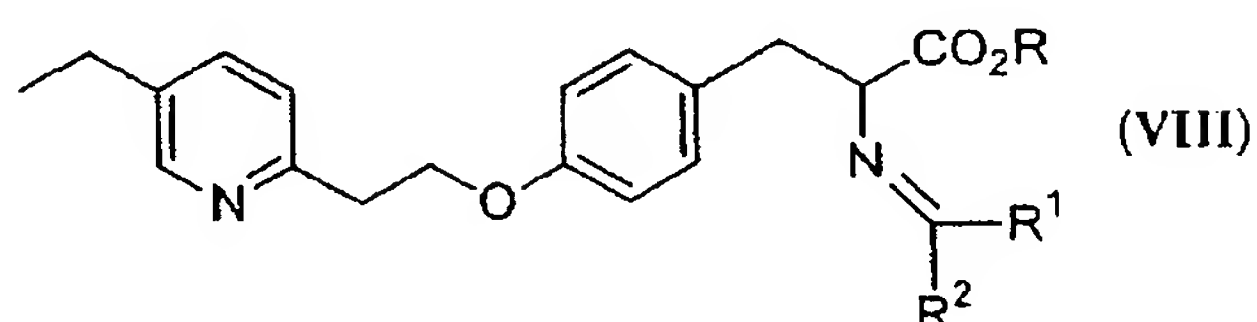
in which R³ and R⁴ can be, without distinction, hydrogen, or a C₁-C₆ alkyl group, or a C₁-C₄ alkoxy group;

with the condition that R¹ and R² cannot both be hydrogen,

with a compound of formula (III)

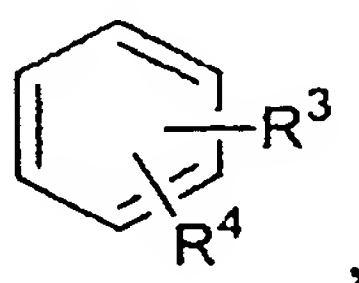


in which Z is a leaving group, to obtain the compound of formula (VIII)



which, subsequently, is submitted to deprotection of the amino group and hydrolysis of the ester group.

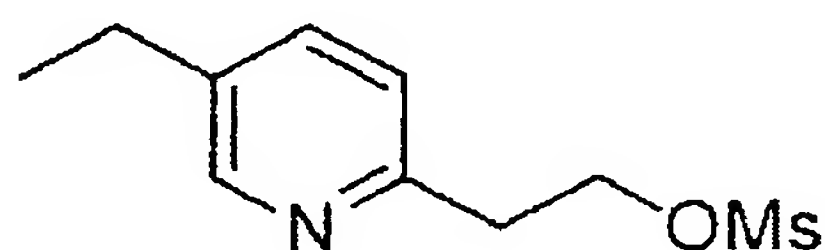
3. (Original) A method according to claim 2, characterized in that R is the methyl group.
4. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim[[s]] 2 [[and 3]], characterized in that Z is a sulphonic ester.
5. (Currently Amended) A method according to ~~any one of the claims~~ claim 2 to 4, characterized in that Z is the methanesulphonyl (mesyl) group.
6. (Currently Amended) A method according to ~~any one of the claims~~ claim 2 to 5, characterized in that R¹ is hydrogen and R² is an aryl group of formula



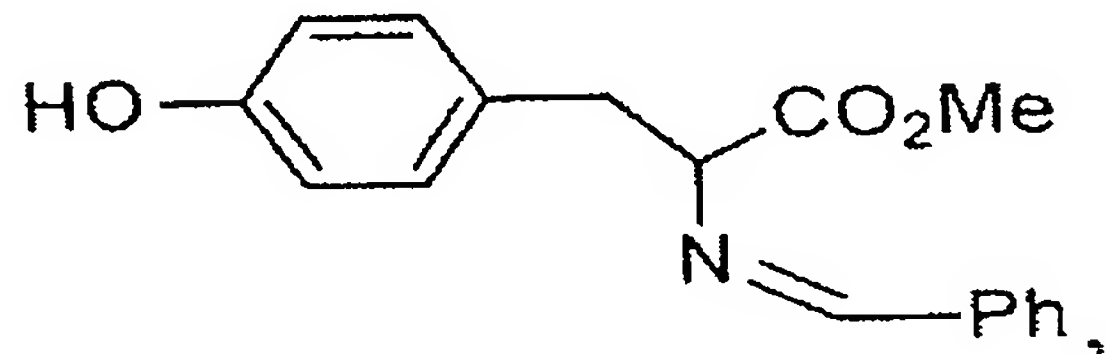
in which R^3 and R^4 can be, without distinction, hydrogen, a C_1 - C_6 alkyl group or a C_1 - C_4 alkoxy group.

7. (Currently Amended) A method according to ~~any one of the claims claim~~ 2 to 6, characterized in that R^1 is hydrogen and R^2 is phenyl.

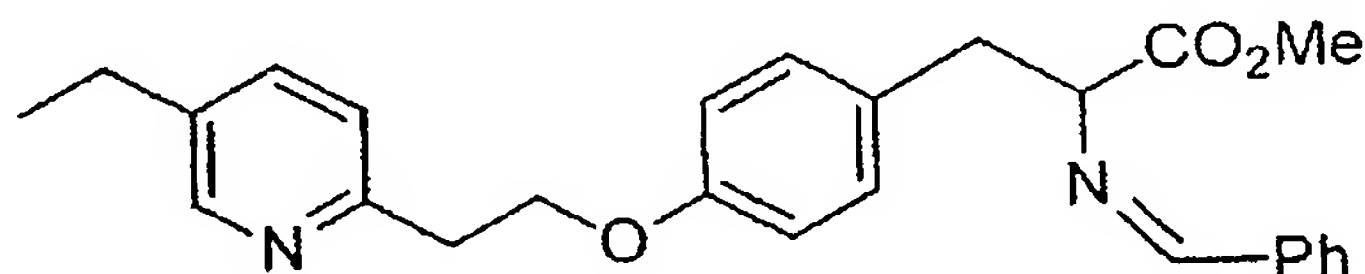
8. (Currently Amended) A method according to ~~any one of the claims claim~~ 2 to 7, characterized in that it comprises reaction of the compound of formula



with the compound of formula



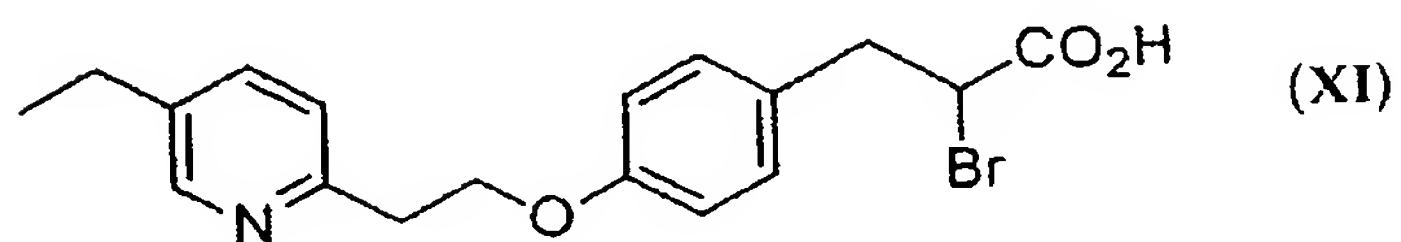
to obtain the compound of formula



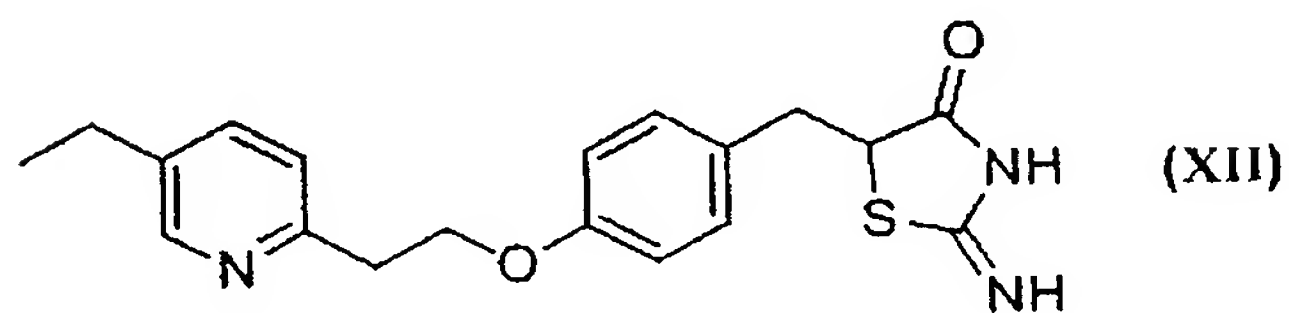
which, subsequently, is submitted to deprotection of the benzylideneamino group and hydrolysis of the methyl ester.

9. (Currently Amended) A method according to ~~any one of the claims claim~~ 2 to 8, characterized in that in addition it comprises the following stages for production of pioglitazone (I):

(a) bromination of compound (IV) to obtain the compound of formula (XI)



(b) condensation of compound (XI) with thiourea to obtain the compound of formula (XII)



(c) hydrolysis of compound (XII) to obtain pioglitazone.

10. (Original) Use of the compound of claim 1 in the preparation of pioglitazone.